

You Can Make a Difference!

Fairfax Families4Kids works because of community involvement. It gives individuals an important role to play in helping children grow up to be productive adults.

♥ **HOST** a child (age 9 to 18) regularly for overnights on weekends during a three-month period. Get to know the child and work with **Fairfax Families4Kids** to find the child a permanent home.

♥ **ADVOCATE** to increase the circle of people who might be interested in a specific child or group of children. Join with the host family to engage your community. Send out e-mails and letters and present information at work and in your neighborhood and faith community.

♥ **MENTOR** a child in foster care. A mentor is the child's friend, who makes a commitment to meet with the child at least twice a month for outings and conversation.

♥ **VOLUNTEER** and help with recruiting, community presentations, publicity, weekend activities, transportation and more.

♥ **FOSTER** a child temporarily until he or she can return home safely or be placed in another permanent family.

♥ **ADOPT!** Provide a permanent, caring family for an older child.



"Right away we realized that John is a good kid, and a good young man. Our first weekend hosting John, we didn't know what to expect, but now we welcome John as a member of our family."

– William Whitaker
Host Dad



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"A hundred years from now it will not matter what my bank account was, the sort of house I lived in, or the kind of car I drove. But the world may be different because I was important in the life of a child."

– Forest E. Witcraft
Teacher

FAIRFAX4 FAMILIES4KIDS

703-324-7656; TTY 703-222-9452
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Help a Child Find a Family



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Every year in Fairfax County,

as many as 20 teens in foster care leave the system without a family. Unable to return safely to their parents or relatives, they have waited and waited to be adopted, but no one ever stepped forward to adopt them.

The kids who wait are usually African American and are age 9 or older when they enter foster care. They have emotional, medical and educational needs. Many have lived in a series of foster homes or residential facilities.



In Fairfax County, every child counts – and every child needs a family.

Foster parents and residential facilities do their best, but they usually cannot provide the one basic element that is crucial – a long-lasting connection to a caring adult. A child without a parent misses so much that other children take for granted: someone to help with school work, to praise an accomplishment, to celebrate a birthday – a place to call home.

Children who grow up without the nurturing and attention of a parent are less likely to do well in school and are more likely to have delays in growth, learning disabilities and psychological problems.

You can be part of the solution to improve the lives and futures of these children.

Lasting connections through weekend activities

Fairfax Families4Kids gives children ages 9 to 18, living in foster care, the opportunity to visit a host family who partners with the child to find the child a permanent family.

The children are matched with host families. During the weekends they spend together, families and children get to know one another in a comfortable, relaxed, nurturing environment. The host family arranges activities that the child enjoys and introduces the child to their circle of friends – in order to spark, with someone, a lasting connection.



Adoptive mom Jacqueline and daughter, Nazboni at age 9.

Participating children are also matched with mentors who become their friends – listening and responding to their questions and concerns, and engaging them in other community activities.

During this process, something wonderful can happen. Host families may identify a particular family in their circle of friends who wants to adopt the child. Sometimes host families adopt the child they host. Others who come in contact with the children are inspired to become mentors or advocates for them.

Give a child the greatest gift imaginable – the opportunity to have a permanent family.

Fairfax Families4Kids is an initiative of the Fairfax County Department of Family Services, Foster Care and Adoption program.

We can work together to find families for our kids.



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We recruit and train host and adoptive families, support families during the weekend process, prepare children for adoption and participation in the weekend visits, help host families plan weekend activities, screen interested adoptive families, manage the adoption process and provide information about the program at community meetings and events.

Fairfax Families4Kids is working to engage the community to support the children by creating partnerships with civic, social, fraternal and faith organizations. We conduct community education programs and run group weekend events for the kids and interested families.

To find out more, call

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